

TOWN OF ARLINGTON

Recreation Department
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation



Recreation Department

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Shirley Canniff
Leslie Mayer
Jen Rothenberg
Phil Lasker
Scott Walker
Josh Fenollosa - Associate
Sarah Carrier- Associate

MEETING NOTICE

The Park and Recreation Commission
Tuesday, March 12, 2024
7:00 PM – Arlington Community Center (2nd Floor)

AGENDA

- 1) Arlington/Belmont Crew Annual Review
- 2) Mini Pitch Discussion with ASC
- 3) Amphibian Restoration Project – Katja Kwaku, University of Connecticut
- 4) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:
 - a) Capital Plan Review
 - b) Private Preschool Permitting Discussion –4/9/2024
 - c) Parallel and Menotomy Final Design Review – 4/23/2024
- 5) Correspondence Received: Off Leash Concern (E. Gray), Preschool Park Permits (D. Bamel, B. Walsh)
- 6) Minute Approval – 2/13/2024 & 2/27/2024
- 7) New Business
 - a) Artificial Turf Committee Update –Joe Connelly and Leslie Mayer
 - b) Open Space Committee Update – Shirley Canniff
- 8) Public Comment

Town of Arlington

Arlington Belmont Crew, Inc.

Agreement Terms for Use of Property for

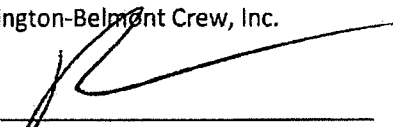
Equipment Storage and Pond Access located at Pond Lane, Lot

1. Provide a clear map with the dimensions of the fenced area. A survey provided to the Town on December 1, 2021.
2. All Arlington Belmont equipment, boats, trailers, etc. must be stored within the fenced area and not on other portions of the Park and Recreation property, (other than the regatta tent trailer, boat trailers and AB Crew storage sheds). Anything stored outside the fenced area must have the location approved by the Recreation Department.
3. The storage of all flammable liquids must be stored in a location/site approved by the Arlington Fire Department. Pending approval by the Arlington Fire Department, the flammable liquids storage cabinet will be located within the cage.
4. Arlington Belmont Crew agrees to keep the area within the fenced storage area and the dirt parking area adjacent to the storage area reasonably clean and free of debris throughout their permitted seasons (fall and spring). This shall also include at a minimum a pre-season and post-season clean-up.
5. Recreation must have key access to fenced area and shed(s).
6. All staff involved with the program to be CORI checked every two years by Arlington Belmont Crew and an annual letter must be provided to Arlington Recreation stating this has been completed.
7. Liability Insurance must be submitted prior to each rowing season.
8. All participants must be members of US Rowing, which provides Arlington Belmont Crew access to liability insurance.
9. The season length to be submitted each year upon request of Arlington Recreation, including non-water practices, on the pond days/time and proposed season end date for spring and fall.
10. Full adherence to terms of existing Storage Shed policy, Amplification policy and all Town by-laws (especially related to motorboat usage on Spy Pond).
11. All unscheduled/special events outside of documented season must be submitted and approved separately using the Town of Arlington Special Event form .
12. Any program or site expansion needs to be reviewed and receive approval from the Park and Recreation Commission.
13. All program activity must stay in approved shoreline locations (via the boat ramp or beach area or use of Boys & Girls docks for boat launches by separate arrangement) to minimize erosion.
14. Arlington Belmont Crew will pay Arlington Recreation a fee of \$10 per High School participant for each fall and spring season, as well as an annual fee of \$1,000.

15. Town will continue to pay for the rental and cleaning of portable restroom and prune trees when requested by Arlington Belmont Crew to protect its equipment or participants.
16. Access to the pond shall only be via the boat ramp or beach area (and docks shared with Boys & Girls Club under a separate arrangement). There is no activity allowed along the shore embankment.
17. The Park and Recreation Commission and Arlington Belmont Crew will review this agreement on an annual basis at their September meetings and it must be signed annually by all parties.

Dated: March 30, 2022

Arlington-Belmont Crew, Inc.

By: 
Douglas Rosner
President

Town of Arlington – Parks and Recreation

By: 
Name:
Title:

BUZZELL FIELD PARK

Buzzell Field Park currently features a single basketball court. Activitas recommends expanding the facility by adding a second court and installing a system of athletic lighting to extend usable hours. In addition, Activitas recommends improvements to user experience including seating areas and a shade structure. The existing playground, walking paths, and softball outfield space would remain undisturbed.

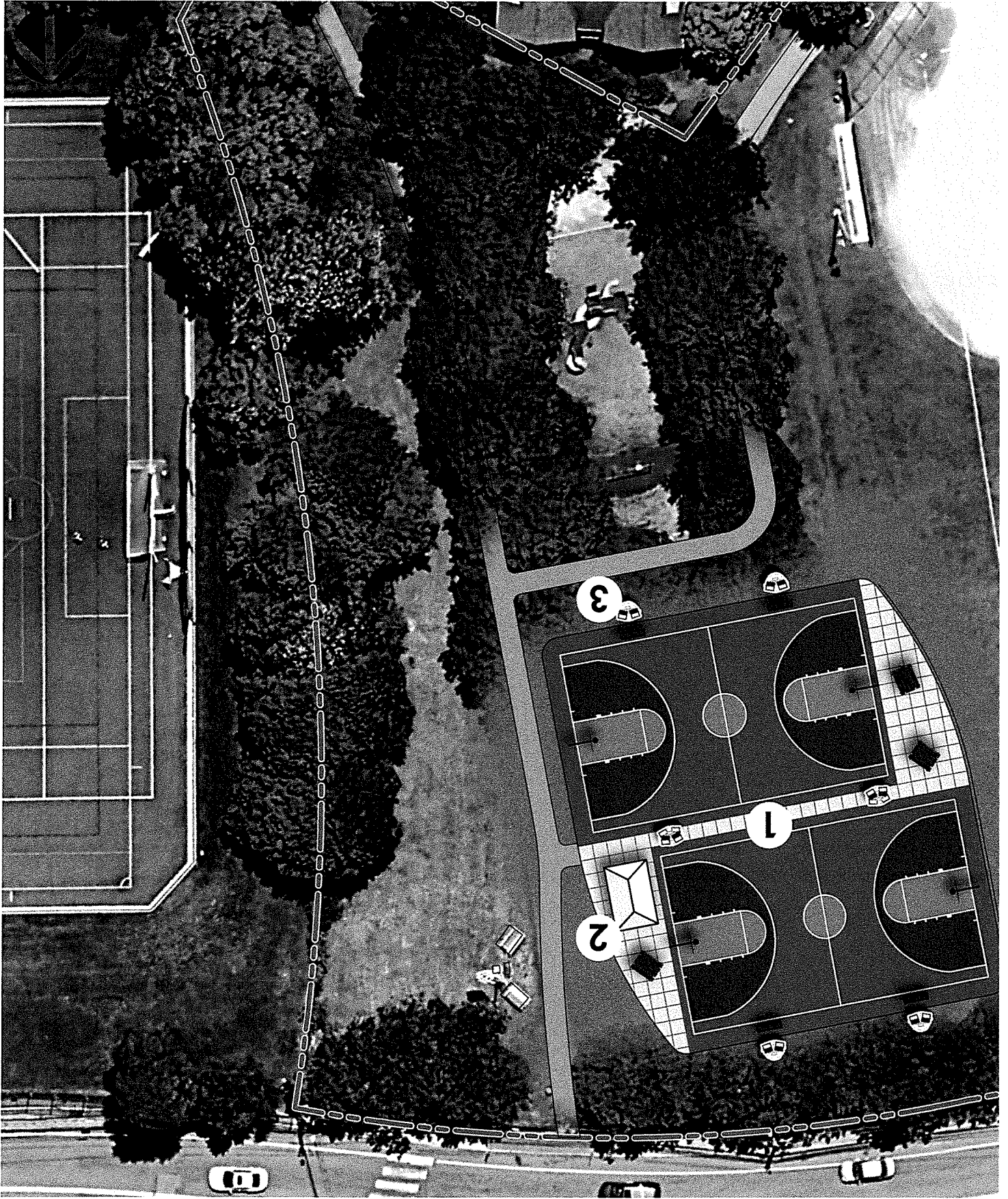
Buzzell Field Park was identified as a priority for renovation primarily due to its location. The court is highly visible and located centrally in Town, with access across the park from the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway. As basketball players are the most likely to join pickup games, the visibility and proximity to the street and other local amenities may encourage additional use, particularly in the evenings when the lights are on.

IMPACTS ON PROGRAMMING

Feedback from the community for basketball was focused on the desire for a pair of full-sized basketball courts for tournament play located somewhere in Town, ideally with lighting. The addition of lights and seating would increase the playability of the courts and the addition of athletic netting to the perimeter of the court would prevent conflict between softball and basketball use that might otherwise affect when the courts could be used.

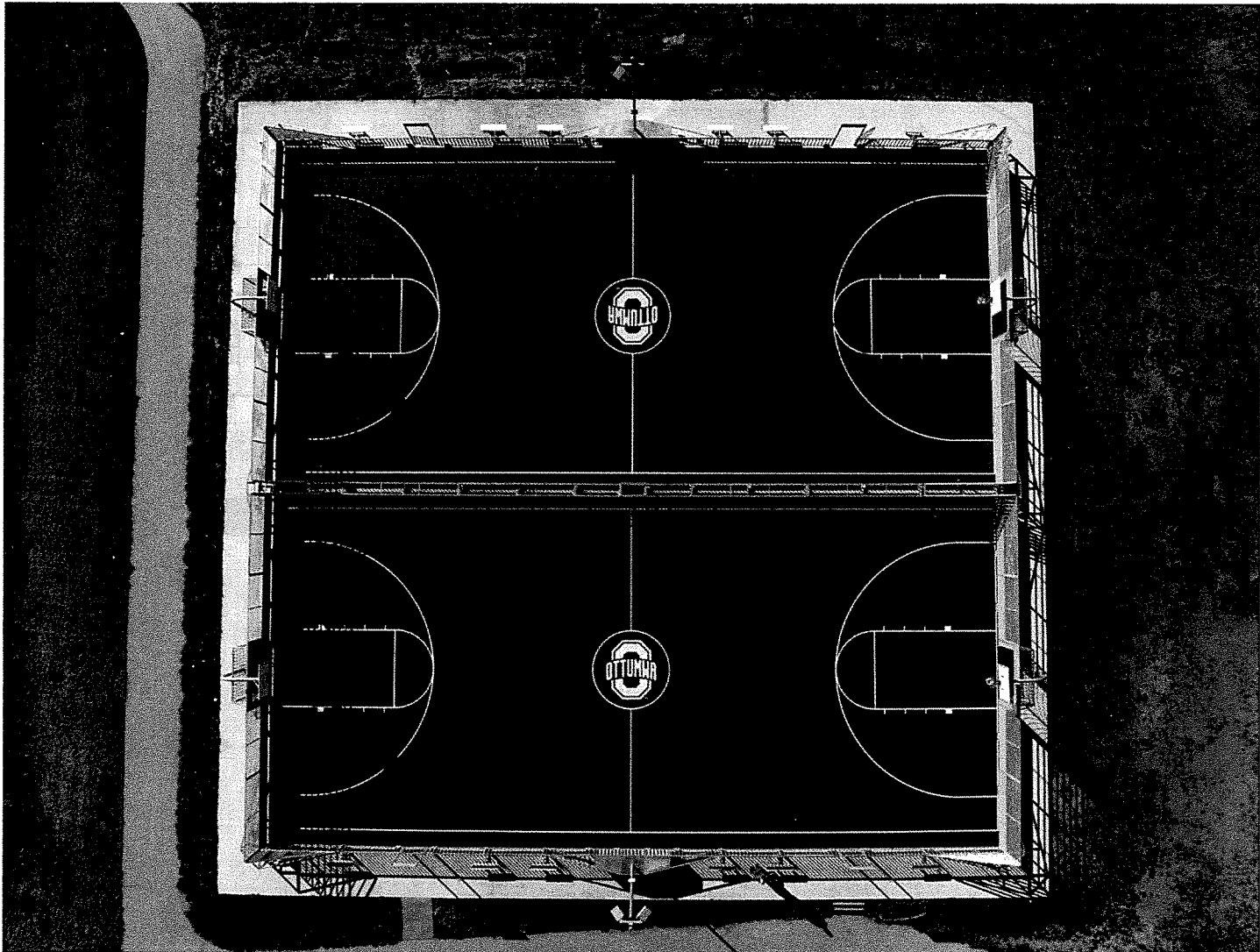
ROUGH ORDER OF MAGNITUDE OF COST

ITEM	COST
MOBILIZATION AND SITE PREPARATION	\$ 43,742.00
EARTHWORK & DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 147,000.00
NEW PICKLEBALL COURTS	\$ 155,546.00
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS	\$ 282,019.50
ALTERNATE 1 - ADD FOR TENNIS LIGHTING SYSTEM	\$ 255,000.00
SUBTOTAL	\$ 883,307.50
8% General Conditions	\$ 70,664.60
12% Contractors Overhead and Profit	\$ 105,996.90
CONSTRUCTION SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,059,969.00
20% Construction and Design Contingency	\$ 211,993.80
10% Soft Costs and Design Fees	\$ 105,996.90
TOTAL	\$ 1,377,959.70
Estimated Impact of Inflation on Construction Costs	2025 \$ 1,433,078.09
	2026 \$ 1,490,401.21
	2027 \$ 1,550,017.26





5



6

Safe Places to Play Mini-Pitch



To increase access to soccer in underserved communities, the U.S. Soccer Foundation works with community partners nationwide to offer *Soccer for Success*, a high-quality after-school program that is proven to deliver positive health and social outcomes for participants.



To address the lack of access to soccer facilities for structured programming and free play, our *Safe Places to Play* program transforms underutilized spaces into state-of-the-art soccer pitches for kids. Mini-pitches – small, customized, hard court spaces – are perfectly suited for communities where space is at a premium. The brightly colored pitches also transform the look and feel of neighborhoods.

4.1 | BUZZELL FIELD PARK



GENERAL INFORMATION

ADDRESS	51-59 Summer Street
NEIGHBORHOOD	Arlington Center
PARCEL SIZE	5.1 acres
ZONING	OS
PARKING	Street
MAIN USES	Softball, Basketball

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

ADJACENT WETLANDS	No
AQUIFER LOCATION	Yes, High-Yield
FLOOD HAZARD	No
AUL STATUS	RAO, PA - Oil and Hazardous Materials
SOILS	Udorthents 655

SITE OVERVIEW

Buzzell Field Park contains two softball infields, a full-sized basketball court, and a playground. Arlington Catholic High School's synthetic turf athletic field is adjacently located on a connected parcel.

User groups identified Buzzell Field Park as the busiest basketball court in Town.

6% of users surveyed identified Buzzell Field Park as their favorite basketball court. This indicates an average level of popularity within the Town.

The positive attributes selected most often were:

- Proximity to home, school, or work (78%)
- Court is well-maintained (36%)
- Attractiveness of the court (27%)
- Attractiveness of the neighborhood/park (27%)

The negative attributes selected most often were:

- Court is unattractive (40%)
- Court is not well maintained (40%)
- Court is too crowded (40%)

Current Site Conditions

The last renovation to the courts occurred in 2003. The existing asphalt is in fair-to-good condition. Some surface-level cracking has been identified and aesthetic staining and water damage was noted. There are no deep cracks or dead spots felt underfoot. The surface is generally level and no puddling was identified onsite.

There is no perimeter fencing and netting around the court.

Both basketball goals are fixed height and double rimmed with fan-shaped backboards. The goals are in fair-to-good condition. Components including netting are intact.

Access to the court is provided via an asphalt walkway that connects to an adjacent path. The slope and width of the path meet ADA guidelines.

Additional site amenities include two site benches located near, but not directly adjacent, to the court. There are no team benches or other athletic amenities directly associated with the court. The court has no storage.

General Improvement Considerations

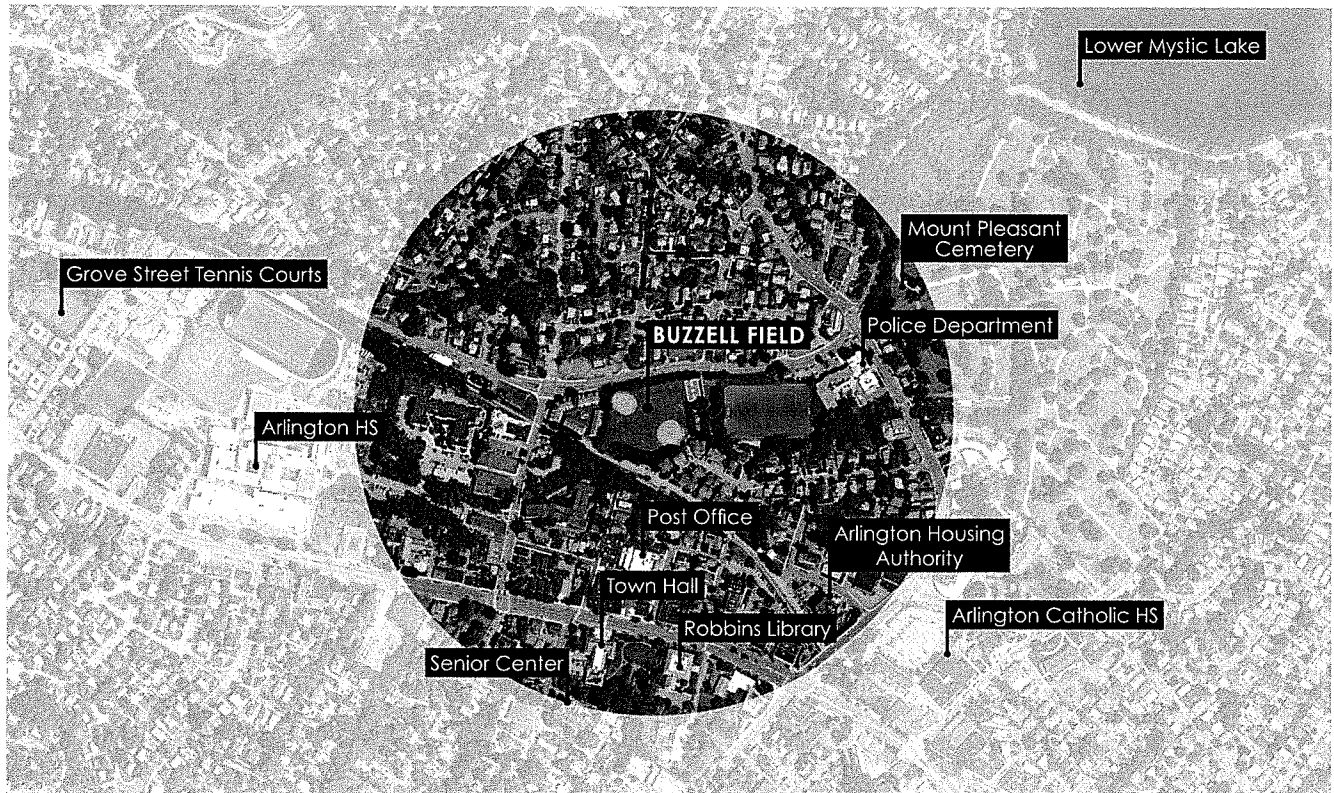
- The court is adjacent to a busy street and is highly visible. It is located within a five-minute walk of many major community resources, including Arlington High School and the Robbins Library.
- The Minuteman Bikeway runs through the site behind the softball field.
- The site is under an AUL due to oil and hazardous material contamination. It is currently subject to reporting conditions. The AUL limits potential use and excavation.
- There may be room for expansion within property lines. Unprogrammed space can be found onsite directly adjacent to the courts.
- There is no perimeter fencing or netting around the court, which may increase player safety and help mitigate conflicts between sports that may occur. The court is located near the baseline of an adjacent softball field.
- The addition of a second court would improve playability and alleviate potential crowding that may occur at a popular site.
- The addition of court lighting would extend usable hours.

LOCUS MAP



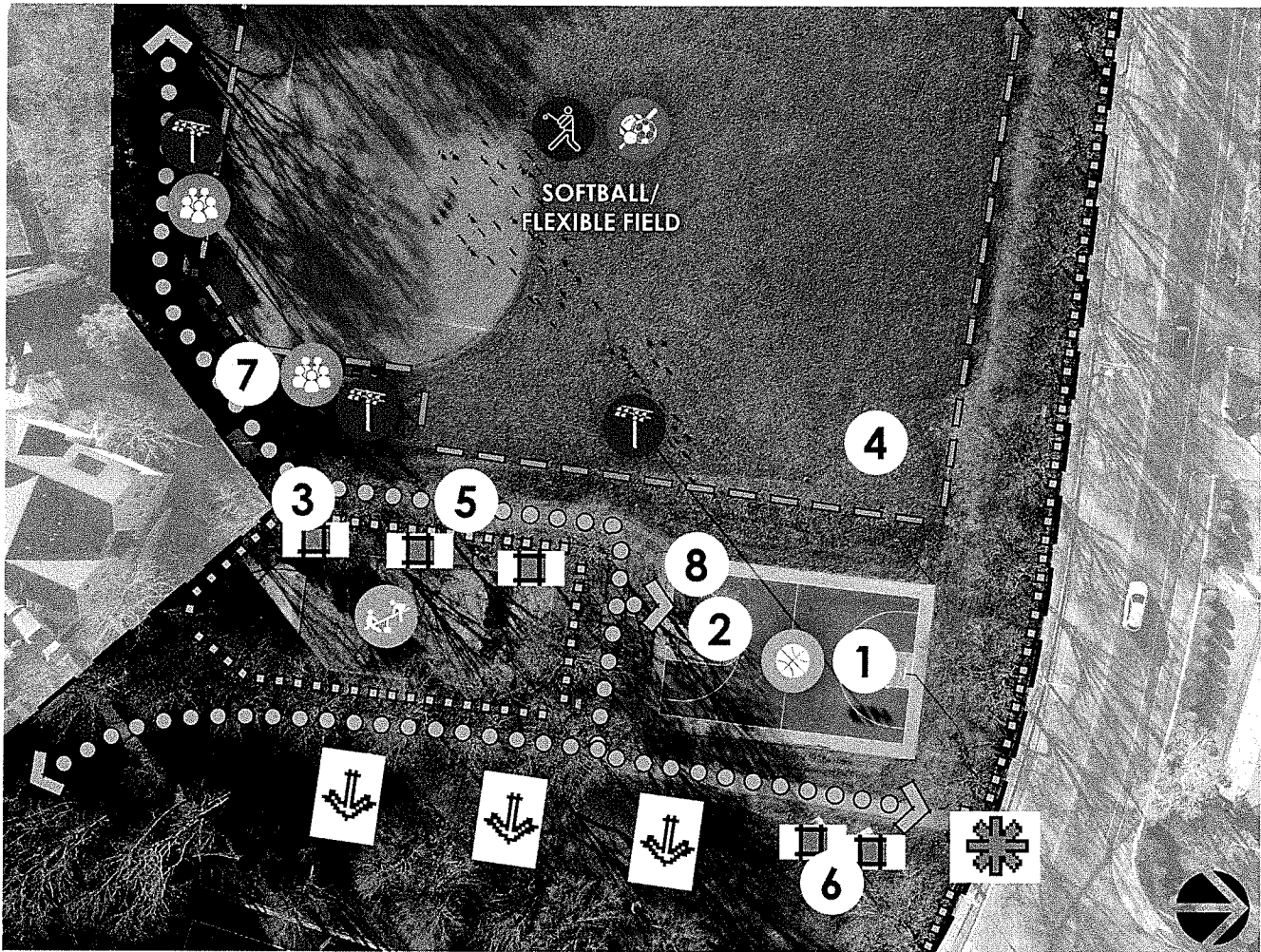
Map 4.1A : Buzzell Field Park - Locus Map

FIVE-MINUTE WALK ANALYSIS



Map 4.1B : Buzzell Field Park - Five Minute Walk Analysis

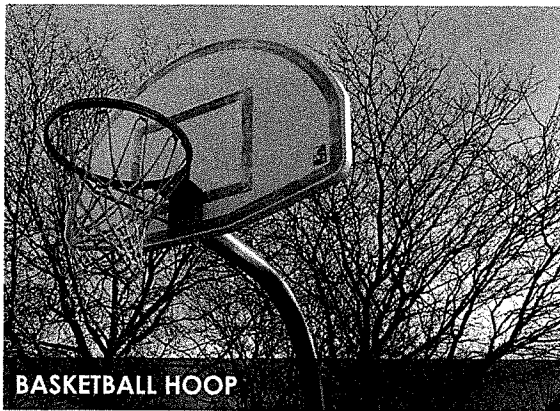
SITE ANALYSIS



LEGEND:

	PROPERTY LINE		PLAYGROUND
	ACTIVE RECREATION AREA		BASKETBALL COURT
	BASEBALL BACKSTOP		ATHLETIC LIGHTING
	CHAIN LINK FENCE		SOFTBALL FIELD
	PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION		MULTI-SPORT FIELD
	PARK BENCH		TEAM AREA/DUGOUT
	EXISTING ACCESS POINT		
	SIGNIFICANT SLOPE		
	PICTURE REFERENCE		

1



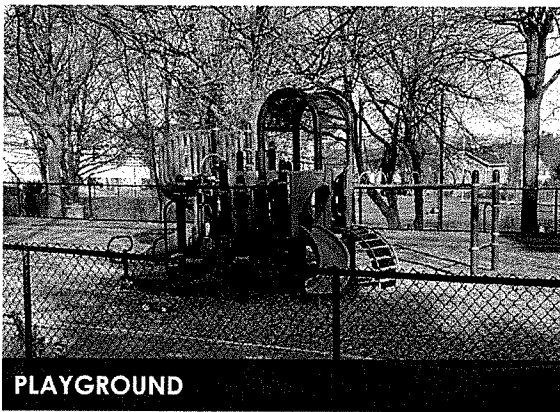
BASKETBALL HOOP

2



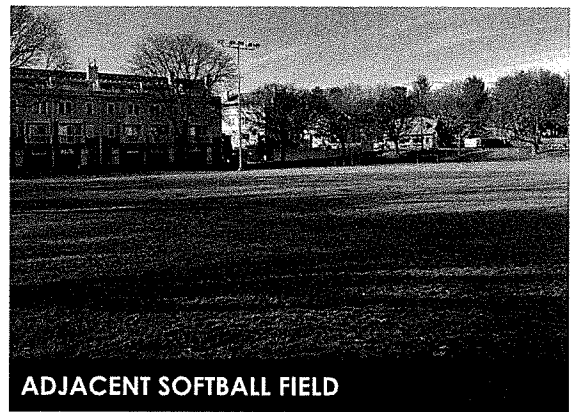
BASKETBALL COURT CRACKING

3



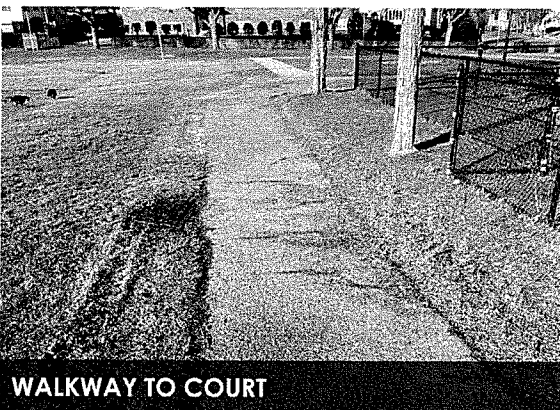
PLAYGROUND

4



ADJACENT SOFTBALL FIELD

5



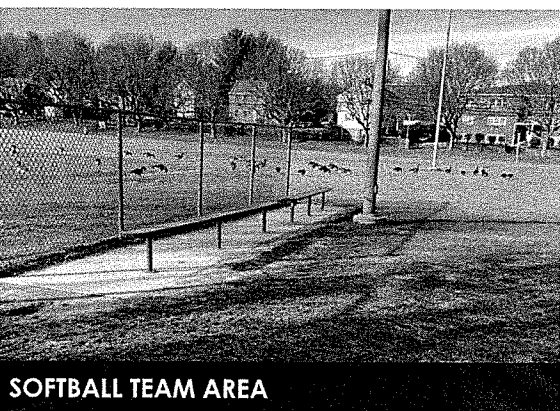
WALKWAY TO COURT

6



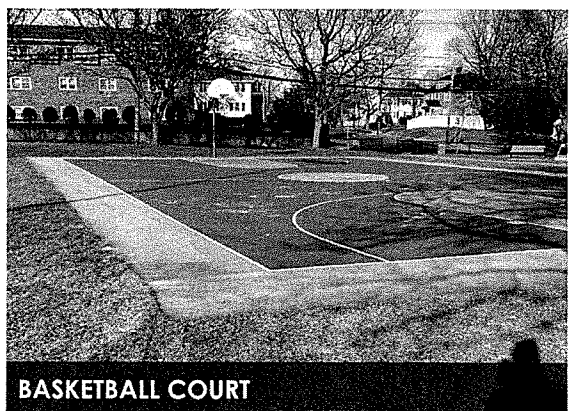
SEATING AND FLAG BY PARK ACCESS

7



SOFTBALL TEAM AREA

8



BASKETBALL COURT

Katja Kwaku, M.S.
University of Connecticut

Restoration of Wood Frog and Spring Peeper Populations to Urban Ponds in Arlington, MA

Wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) and spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) are frog species native to Massachusetts with documented occurrence records throughout the state. However, habitat fragmentation and modification by humans has caused extirpations in now-urban areas. This project aims to restore wood frog and spring peeper populations to some urban ponds in Arlington, MA. Restoring and conserving urban frog populations will not only increase the biodiversity of the area, but also enhance local food webs, increase pest control, and strengthen human connections with nature by increasing nature sounds and visual encounters, which can promote well-being.

Likely sites for this restoration project in Arlington include temporary ponds at Menotomy Rocks Park, McClennen Park, Arlington Reservoir, and Meadowbrook Park. Source populations will come from rural ponds in Weston, MA and potentially one pond in Wayland, MA owned by the Sudbury Valley Trustees. Urban and rural ponds will be <20km apart. To further minimize the risk of spreading or transferring pathogens among study ponds, all nets, footwear, and other equipment will be disinfected with a 3% bleach solution between ponds according to [NEPARC protocols](#). This project has been approved by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Arlington Conservation Commission, the Weston Conservation Commission, and the Sudbury Valley Trustees.

Wood frog and spring peeper eggs from rural ponds will be transferred to enclosures within urban ponds. To ensure the long-term sustainability of source populations, only a small fraction (<10%) of the eggs in source ponds will be collected. Wood frog and spring peeper eggs from rural ponds will also be placed in enclosures. Eggs will be rinsed with recipient pond water and a 0.1% hydrogen peroxide solution before introduction to enclosures to prevent the transfer of any pathogens. Each of the urban ponds will contain eggs from each of the rural ponds, but each rural pond will only contain its own eggs. Having them in enclosures allows for the monitoring and comparison of urban and rural larval growth and survival rates. Initial egg enclosures are made of 40x28x17cm plastic containers with floats and with mesh openings on the sides that allow water to move in and out of the container. Each container will contain 1-2 partial egg masses. Once they are hatchlings (Gosner stage ~24), the larvae will be moved to 30cm diameter mesh cylindrical enclosures made of plastic-coated garden fencing and fiberglass window screening and stocked with leaf litter. Each of these enclosures will be stocked with 20-25 larvae. Both types of enclosures will be closed to exclude potential predators. Similar projects in Milford, CT and Bangor, ME have documented similar wood frog larval survival rates and performance between urban and rural groups.


Once the tadpoles are close to metamorphosis (Gosner stage ~40), I will batch- mark them with calcein fluorochrome following the procedures of [Andis \(2018\)](#). This involves submerging them in a 1.0% calcein solution for 3.5-4 mins and then rinsing them with distilled water before releasing them into the pond. Over the following years, I will conduct surveys within 20m of each pond to find juveniles. The calcein labels will be detected with a 440-460nm flashlight and corresponding glasses. I will use and occupancy modelling and mark-recapture methods to

Off-leash activity by Active Waggers yet again

ebgray@gmail.com <ebgray@gmail.com>

Tue 2/20/2024 9:12 AM

To: Richard Flynn <rfflynn@town.arlington.ma.us>; Courtney Wilson <cwilson@town.arlington.ma.us>; Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>; sean.garballey@mahouse.gov <sean.garballey@mahouse.gov>; Mary Greenwald <megreenwald@verizon.net>; 'Nancy Hoe' <nhoec@comcast.net>; strutnpuppy@gmail.com <strutnpuppy@gmail.com>

 4 attachments (3 MB)

feb 18 2024 4.JPG; feb 18 2024 3.JPG; feb 18 2024 2.JPG; Feb 18 2024.JPG;

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good morning all,

While I encourage the entrepreneurship of small businesses and support our local and nearby dog walking and home dog boarding businesses, I am appalled at the blatant flouting of both Arlington's and Lexington's off-leash bylaws by Active Waggers. I know that Arlington's ACO has visited the owner, Stacia Biele on November 27 as per your email of that date, and personally informed her of the rules after the owner was frequently seen using McClennen Park and other Arlington venues for large group off-leash activity throughout the day. These dogs were also often not under voice control and often out of sight of the handler. I am aware that similar issues have occurred in Whipple Hill and that the owner was recently visited by Lexington's ACO and cautioned after incidents of problematic behavior and not abiding by the two dogs per handler rule.

Unfortunately, the warnings do not seem to have been effective since the owner continues to post photos on their Facebook page of groups of off-leash dogs at various places including, most recently, the beach at Arlington's Reservoir on Sunday, February 18, 2024. (select photos attached – with many more posted online but not captured.) Note that the handler is also allowing dogs onto thin ice to chase a ball.

I do hope that you will address this with the owner yet again in a way that gets the message across that this is totally unacceptable.

I also hope that you continue to support the rights of all Arlington residents to enjoy our parks and recreation areas.

Thank you,

Ericka

Ericka B. Gray | *she/her*
Arlington, MA 02474
617.921.2506 Cell

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Concern about New Daycare Fees to Use Playgrounds

Deborah Bamel <deborah.bamel@gmail.com>

Fri 3/1/2024 4:26 PM

To: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>; Scott Walker <Swalker@town.arlington.ma.us>; Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Juli Brazile <jbrazile@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I am writing to express my concern about the proposed policy that would require daycares and preschools in Arlington to pay fees to use the public parks and playgrounds. This proposed policy will put a direct financial burden on already struggling daycare centers and pass the cost on to families who are drowning in the financial burden of paying for childcare.

The majority of the children using these playgrounds with their daycares are Arlington residents who would be using them regardless of their childcare provider. If my child were home with me or a private nanny, we would be using the same playgrounds free of charge. This means that parents who can't afford to stay home or hire a nanny are being charged to use the same service, creating an additional tax for working parents.

Daycare costs are already exorbitant in Arlington and our center has had to raise tuition twice since we have been going there due to rising costs of food, utilities, and building maintenance. This policy puts yet another financial burden on these already struggling businesses who then in turn have to pass that cost on to the families.

I understand that maintaining our public parks requires funding but this seems like an issue that should be solved through budget negotiations with the town government rather than imposing additional fees on a struggling industry that is providing a needed service for Arlington families. I strongly urge your department to reconsider this policy and look into alternate options to fund playground maintenance.

Thank you for your time,

Deborah Bamel
Arlington resident and parent

15

Please stop proposal to charge Daycare Centers for use of town playgrounds

Brianna Walsh <briannatufts@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 11:33 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Joe,

I have seen the news story that Arlington is considering charging daycare and preschool centers for use of Town of Arlington Parks. I am a resident of Arlington and I have three children ages 3, 6, and 8. My youngest child attends a daycare center in Arlington and walks on some days to play at parks in the town with her daycare center.

I am strongly opposed to the Town starting to charge daycare and preschool centers for use of the parks. It will directly and negatively impact my family and my child.

The parks are there for our children to use. No additional fees should be levied outside of taxes. I love that my child can go to our neighborhood parks with her daycare center. I have looked through past meeting minutes and found this was proposed in November, following complaints by residents who were feeling the parks were getting overcrowded. If that is an issue, then let's look at adding more parks. I try to stay connected to town activities and conversations, but this topic has not come up with parents of small children in daycare centers in Arlington that I've been part of. What interaction has the Parks department had with Arlington Residents such as myself who are pleased that my children can go to our town parks while in daycare? I am concerned the Parks department has not properly engaged with residents on this topic.

What difference does it make if my children go to a park every day...with me? with a nanny? with a grandparent? with a preschool? Those are all different childcare options and they all use the parks.

This is not the same as sport teams utilizing fields. Sport teams pay for exclusive use of fields. Groups from daycare centers do not use parks exclusively - they are there along with other groups (children at parks with parents, nannies, grandparents). Many daycare centers also rotate the parks that they walk to, so the pattern is not predictable, and it gives children a wider variety of experiences.

Please do not proceed with the proposal to charge preschools and daycares for use of the parks.

Brianna Walsh

51 Lockeland Ave, Arlington, MA

16

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES

Approved

February 13, 2024

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order in the main meeting room at the Community Center on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Scott Walker, Phil Lasker, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Leslie Mayer and Josh Fenollosa. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present. Sarah Carrier was not in attendance.

Anticipated Speakers: Mike Hendy, Arlington Classic Car Club

Preliminary Matter: Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance and welcomed anticipated speakers and members of the public to the Recreation Commission meeting.

Special Event Requests

Reservoir Parking Lot – Classic Car Show - Mr. Hendy submitted a request to reserve the parking lot adjacent to the reservoir on June 2, 2024 (rain date June 9) to host a classic car show. Mr. Hendy was accompanied by two members of the club and provided a brief history of the 422-member group and how the club came to be. He outlined the details of the event:

- 30-40 cars anticipated based on attendance of their Mystic Wine Shoppe show.
- Hiring an ice cream truck and would like to allow one of the current members to set up a donut stand.
- A "marshall" would be designated to assist with parking.
- Prizes will be awarded based on judging.

Ms. Rothenberg – Suggested hiring a police detail because of the high traffic activity on nice, summer Sundays. Police would also be able to monitor on-street parking.

Mr. Connelly – Will work with Mr. Hendy on the police detail.

Ms. Mayer – Asked for more details about the judging categories and prizes. She also noted that the parking lot would likely be full by the afternoon set-up/start time. Ms. Canniff requested that the parking lot be closed for the event as a safety precaution as enthusiasts walked through the cars on display. Mr. Connelly stated that he will block off the parking lot the night before. Ms. Rothenberg also suggested posting signage a week beforehand to advise people that the lot would be closed for the event.

Mr. Walker and Ms. Canniff – Extended their support and are looking forward to attending with their families.

Mr. Fenollosa – Inquired about additional groups attending as it could impact Lowell Street traffic. Mr. Hendy stated that other car clubs had not been invited.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the permit with additional conditions including a police detail, a safety plan and public notification, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 5-0.

Bark for Life and Relay for Life

Ms. Rothenberg – Suggested permitting one event rather than both. She noted that the events are within 6 weeks of each other and have been moved from the fall to the spring. She also stated that the organization and the individual requesting to host the events have no connection to Arlington. Ms. Rothenberg also pointed out that the Bark for Life request indicates that there would be commercial canine vendors at the event, which is not permitted.

Ms. Canniff – Mentioned that there are several other dog related events hosted in Arlington.

Ms. Mayer – Questioned the grounds for denying one event over another.

Mr. Connelly – Noted that the fall was a better time to host the event because there is still water in the Rez. He will invite the American Cancer Society representative to attend a future meeting to discuss both requests.

No vote was taken on the Bark for Life or Relay for Life special event requests.

Capital Plan Process Discussion – The Commission discussed potential ways to get the community more involved in the Capital planning process.

Mr. Connelly – Stated the importance of generating community support through co-sponsorship for projects, encouraging the public to bring project ideas to the Commission and getting more people involved in surveys, public meetings and neighborhood discussions. Mr. Connelly shared that Crosby was chosen because it was deemed to be the most unsafe court in town and in the worst condition. The CPA presentation stirred an immediate reaction from the neighbors.

Ms. Canniff - Noted the increasing and constant push-back from the public on some recent projects. The projects in the Capital Plan are necessary to address safety and accessibility concerns while also creating a more beautiful, versatile park. She shared the positive, rewarding experience the Commission was having with the Parallel Park neighbors who had reached out with their ideas. She added that the Commission still needs to create their own Capital Plan and honor their responsibilities.

Mr. Lasker – Noted the need to come up with a plan to resolve competing interests. He also pointed out that a lot of the push back comes from neighborhoods and individuals that don't attend public meetings. Mr. Fenollosa said that it will be helpful to hear the opponents' point of view so the wants and needs of both sides can be considered. He also stated that putting out feasibility study results and conceptual design plans, that are needed for budgeting purposes, too early could result in more opposition as often times those conceptual plans are mistaken for final plans.

Ms. Mayer – Courts had support from those who participate in court activities. Push-back came from the neighborhood who did not participate in the public meetings. Many stated that they did not know about them. She also noted that projects cannot begin until after July 1 (when CPA funding is approved). Recently projects have been approved in separate phases, design and construction, because more groups are applying and competing for funding. She also stated that competing groups, many of which are new, are getting into the same project cycle as the Park Commission. Ms. Mayer pointed out that ARPA funding is no longer available and state money secured by Sean Garballey is an occasional source of funding but is not something that can be worked into a long range capital plan.

Mr. Walker – Suggested posting a Capital Plan 6 months to a year in advance to invite sponsorship. He feels it makes more sense to reduce the number of projects to increase the likelihood of being awarded funding.

Ms. Rothenberg – Added that it may be time to consider doing one project per year. With the Commission's involvement in other department projects (school playgrounds) and multiple PRC projects, there is a lot of extra work for the department. She also suggested the need to educate the public more about the Capital process.

Mr. Connelly – Will share the multi-year Capital Plan with the Commission for review and further discussion about timelines, public notification and gathering support and input. Ms. Rothenberg suggested a "Project Page" to share potential projects with the public. Mr. Lasker shared that the City of

Boston's website includes a list of conceptual design projects, awarded projects and brief bullet-point updates.

Ms. Canniff – Suggested an informal “neighborhood chat” prior to formal public meetings. Mr. Fenollosa noted a previous suggestion to conduct surveys during Town Day events. Ms. Mayer pointed out that Envision Arlington surveys are distributed annually to every household in town along with the census. Survey respondents tend to be the same households each year.

Comments and Items for Future Meetings

- Park/Playground Permitting

Correspondence Received

Gabrielle Keller – Request for berm to address disappearing bird habitats.

Approval of Minutes

- 1/23/2024 – Mr. Lasker motioned to approve the minutes, as written, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 4-0 with Ms. Mayer abstaining from the vote.

New Business

- a. Artificial Turf Committee Update – Mr. Connelly attended the sub-committee meeting today. Experts presented their findings to the committee.

A list of topics with bullet points will be compiled and shared with the public. The document will also include recommendations.

- b. Open Space Committee – Ms. Canniff, no updates.

Public Comment – N/A

Ms. Canniff motioned to adjourn at 8:30pm, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 5-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES

February 27, 2024

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order in the main meeting room at the Community Center on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Scott Walker, Phil Lasker, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Leslie Mayer, Josh Fenollosa and Sarah Carrier. Recreation Director Joe Connelly and ConCom representative Susan Chapnick were also present.

Anticipated Speakers: Amy Hortin, Klarysa Norton, Colleen McGrath and Indigo Blankenspoor – Relay for Life and Bark for Life

Members of the Public: Liz Reisberg

Preliminary Matter: Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance and welcomed anticipated speakers and members of the public to the Recreation Commission meeting.

Special Event Requests

North Union Field – Girl Scout Troop 64772

Troop 64772 has requested a special event permit to host an Easter Egg Hunt, spoon races and other games. The event will serve as a fundraiser to benefit the non-profit organization.

Ms. Mayer – Admission fees are not permitted for events held on public land/Open Space. She also noted that the request was submitted on the Town event application not the Recreation application. Mr. Connelly will advise the group that while fundraising is okay, they cannot charge an admission fee. The permit will be adjusted accordingly.

Ms. Canniff made a motion to approve the event, pending the stated conditions, seconded by Ms. Mayer. Approved 4-0 with Ms. Rothenberg not in attendance for the vote.

Menotomy Rocks Park - Redemption Hill Church

The event request was submitted by Arlington resident Tatyana Chernerko on behalf of a Medford non-profit church.

Mr. Connelly – Typically event requests are not permitted before April 1st, but Easter falls in March this year and we will support the event to be held earlier than traditionally allowed. He noted that the event will be taking place at the same time as the previous request at North Union field.

Ms. Mayer – Raised parking and safety concerns that have come up during other events held at MRP.

Shirley – Noted that if the weather was good the event would attract a larger crowd. She asked how the event would be advertised and if social media would be used.

Mr. Connelly – Will advise the group to secure a police detail and will recommend that the group limit the event to only their church community. The Commission discussed moving the event to another location such as McClennen Park because as it has better parking. Ms. Chernerko stated that she chose MRP because the hills and woods appealed to older children. She is concerned that McClennen is too flat and will not be as fun for the children. She also stated that social media would not be used to advertise the event. The number of attendees would be restricted and would be required to RSVP. Mr. Connelly stated that Hills Hill might be a preferred location because it does have a wooded area as well as better

parking and access to the rink bathrooms. Ms. Mayer and Ms. Rothenberg shared parking concerns and agreed that a police detail would be required based on previous experience with events held at MRP. The Commission agreed to support the event at Hills Hill. Ms. Rothenberg was not present for the vote, but requested the event application be amended, showing the location as Hills Hill rather than MRP.

Ms. Canniff motioned to approve the event, pending location, seconded by Mr. Lasker. Approved 4-0 with Ms. Rothenberg not in attendance for the vote.

Reservoir - Bark for Life and Hurd Field - Relay for Life

Mr. Connelly introduced the event coordinators and supporters. He noted that the event could not be hosted earlier in the spring due to the MIAA softball tournament.

Ms. Mayer – Inquired about the change in scheduling as the Bark for Life was previously held in the fall and the Relay for Life has traditionally been held in the spring. Ms. Hortin stated that Bark for Life was traditionally held in the spring but was held in the fall last year. She also stated that the event sponsor was not available in the fall. The Bark for Life, and other events, are held before the Relay for Life as a “feeder event” to generate interest in the Relay.

Ms. Canniff – Requested more information about other hosting towns/cities. Ms. Hortin advised that the event had been held in Arlington for 20 years after partnering with Arlington High School. She noted that the event hopes to move back to the AHS field/track once the construction project is complete. Ms. Hortin stated that the event was also held in Medford and Woburn but interest dwindled, unlike the strong support from Arlington participants. Ms. McGrath noted that the event was also strongly supported by Arlington High School students who wanted the event close to home.

Ms. Mayer – Advised the overnight events could not be held on Open Space. Inquired if the Bark for Life could be pushed out to next fall. Ms. Hortin noted the need for “feeder events” to generate interest before the Relay for Life. Ms. McGarh shared that different types of crowds attend each event but attract a variety of different people/groups.

Mr. Connelly – Inquired about the “canine vendors” identified on the event request application. Sales for profit are not permitted in Open Space. Ms. Hortin stated that vendors would be conducting “giveaways”. The only fundraising would be from hosting a bake sale at the event. Ms. Rothenberg noted that a bake sale would require the group to acquire a permit from the Board of Health.

Mr. Lasker – Asked if the group was willing to push the Bark for Life to the fall. Ms. Hortin stated that the sponsor could not be in attendance this evening but relayed a message of support. Ms. Hortin will have a conversation with the sponsor about her availability.

Ms. Mayer – Noted that the Rez is not open in May so there is no schedule conflict with the request. Ms. Rothenberg noted that the Rez would also be closed in September.

Ms. Mayer – Expressed concerns about hosting the Relay for Life on Hurd Field as it is one of the Commission’s newly completed projects. Mr. Connelly noted that the path could be used for walking the dogs and that field use would be pending weather and field conditions. Ms. Rothenberg requested that the group submit a rain date. She also questioned the number of attendees. While the application says 65, Ms. Hortin stated that it would likely be 100-150.

Ms. Canniff – Shared Ms. Mayer’s concerns about hosting an event on the newly renovated field. Mr. Connelly said that he would have a discussion with the group regarding the setup; no tents due to the underground irrigation system. The group could potentially use the parking lot and plaza area to set up tents if necessary.

Mr. Fenollosa – Inquired about the lengthy set up time (4 hours prior to the event). Ms. Hortin stated that the small committee needs the time to make the event fun by setting up balloons, banners and other decorations. Mr. Connelly inquired if lighting would be needed to which Ms. Hortin said yes.

Mr. Lasker made a motion to approve the Bark for Life, seconded by Ms. Mayer. Approved 4-1.

Mr. Lasker made a motion to approve the Relay for Life, seconded by Ms. Mayer. Approved 5-0.

Capital Project Updates –

Robbins Farm Construction

- Agreement with manufacturer on slide, waiting on shop drawing approval. Order will take 12-16 weeks.
- Following the order, the contractor will provide a new construction schedule. Completion date of 7/4 is no longer realistic.
- Handrails are needed on both sides of the stairs. Working on pricing, change order and funding options.
- Mr. Lasker expressed concern about the constant changes to the schedule and costs.
- Ms. Canniff and Ms. Rothenberg shared Mr. Lasker's concerns and requested that the contractor be invited to a future meeting or suggested that Mr. Connelly relay the Commission's concerns directly.
- Ms. Mayer inquired about the contingency. Mr. Connelly stated that the project was close to the contingency already "before breaking ground".
- Ms. Canniff requested that the Commission receive email updates as they occur.
- Mr. Fenollosa, Mr. Lasker and Mr. Walker discussed concerns about the manufacturer and the landscape architect. Mr. Lasker asked if Mr. Connelly could request a more affordable alternative. Mr. Connelly stated that the order had already been placed but he will inquire.

Hills Hill MTB

- The design team has a preliminary plan to review with the public at the second public meeting to be held on March 26.
- The design team will present to the Commission after making any design changes resulting from input from the public meeting.
- Upon approval of the Commission the design will be submitted to CPA for review. The CPA Chair, Clarissa Rowe, has requested a second, alternative plan to review.
- Ms. Rothenberg noted that the March 26 public meeting coincides with the biweekly Commission meeting. She recommended holding the public meeting prior to PRC at 6pm. Mr. Fenollosa questioned if limiting the public meeting to 1 hour would be realistic. Mr. Connelly believes the event will be well attended.

Parallel and Menotomy Designs

- A public meeting was held on February 8th went very well. The design team has met and is reviewing feedback.
- Copley Wolff is tweaking final plans and looking at equipment options. The final plans will be available for the Commission to review in early April.
- Both projects are on track for funding approval at the spring Town Meeting.

Rink Parking Lot Study

- Contract has been awarded to Stantec and is waiting to be signed.
- Design team held a meeting for preliminary discussion.
- Awaiting final contract signatures before taking further action.

- ADA Parking Lot/Bike Renovation is separate from the study process. Mr. Fenollosa asked what the survey includes. Mr. Connelly stated that the survey includes the area from the edge of Buck Field to Ryder Street lights, back to the bike path and up the hill toward Summer Street.
- Mr. Connelly advised that ADA funding would be lost if not ready by June.

Drake Village Connection

- NOI approved by ConCom.
- Requesting pricing from SUMCO prior to further action.
- Price will determine if the project moves forward. Mr. Connelly stated that there is some funding left over from the Rez project and some may be available through the Housing Authority.

Bench Donation Approval

Mr. Connelly received the request to install a bench near Rindge Park overlooking the Rez. The language on the application has been edited to meet plaque/bench donation standards. Mr. Parravano was very active in the visually impaired community. Mr. Connelly and Ms. Parravano discussed installing two plaques on the bench, one in writing and one in braille. The Commission discussed possible placement of the plaques. Mr. Walker commented that having two plaques provided a great learning opportunity. Ms. Carrier inquired about having the writing and braille on the same plaque, but Mr. Connelly noted that the plaque would be too big to fit on the slats.

Comments and Items for Future Meetings

- Capital Plan Review – Mr. Connelly shared the current Capital Plan with the Commission to be reviewed prior to discussing public outreach and early public input.
- Private Preschool Permitting Discussion – The Commission discussed permitting preschools for use of playgrounds. Mr. Connelly will be hosting a meeting with preschool directors, Ms. Rothenberg and Ms. Canniff will also be in attendance. Ms. Reisberg asked if there was a comprehensive list of programs with the number of attending children. Mr. Connelly referred her to the EEC website.
- Amphibian Restoration Project – Permission requested by Katja Kwaku, a student at UCONN. Mr. Connelly shared that the project has received approval from ConCom but is being presented to PRC because the suggested locations are park properties. Mr. Walker asked about the presentation to ConCom. Ms. Chapnick stated that the project is for research and does not involve changing the environment. The work is being conducted in a natural setting rather than a lab. Ms. Rothenberg questioned why Ms. Kwaku had requested to conduct her research at local ponds, being that she is not an Arlington resident. Ms. Chapnick said that Ms. Kwaku is conducting research in a variety of areas to conduct testing of water conditions, pH, etc. She noted that Arlington was a preferred location because it provides excellent natural water environments to conduct her research. She noted that ConCom supported the project because the organisms wouldn't be released into the environment at the conclusion of the study. Mr. Lasker noted that the request states that Ms. Kwaku plans to release the frogs into the ponds. Ms. Chapnick said that ConCom didn't approve the release. Mr. Fenollosa also questioned what would be done with the frogs after the research was completed. Ms. Rothenberg shared concern that ConCom approved the project without realizing that the specimens would be released. She requested that ConCom revisit the request. She also expressed concern about the specimen containers being tampered with by the public. Ms. Mayer suggested that Ms. Kwaku be invited to a future meeting to further explain her plan and goals.

Ms. Rothenberg expressed her ongoing concerns about hosting the Relay for Life at Hurd Field. She believes that the estimated attendance is significantly lower than the large numbers from previous years. Ms. Rothenberg requested that the event request be amended to show the estimated anticipated participants as 100-150.

Ms. Chapnick inquired about the status of the off-leash dogs request at MRP. Mr. Connelly said a statement was released stating the Commission is "not changing the policy at this time".

Mr. Lasker asked for an update on the Futsal Court request. Mr. Connelly stated that a request was made to expedite the project if full donations were secured. Mr. Connelly also addressed inquiries about naming rights and sponsorships. Ms. Mayer noted that naming rights may be under the jurisdiction of Town Meeting or BOS.

Correspondence Received

Mr. Connelly forwarded correspondence to the Commission from B. Anthony regarding Hills Hill, W. Evans about Hills/McClennen and several parents regarding preschool permitting.

Approval of Minutes – The minutes from February 13, 2024 were tabled.

New Business

- Artificial Turf Committee Update – Mr. Connelly shared that the subcommittee chairperson and Natasha Waden from the Board of Health are compiling the narratives into a consolidated report for review. Data collection is still being conducted. An additional speaker may be invited to present a future meeting. There is a placeholder for Town Meeting so the goal is to be ready by April for spring Town Meeting. Ms. Rothenberg questioned if there were any other warrant articles pertaining to PRC.
- Open Space Committee – Ms. Canniff, no updates from Open Space but Ms. Canniff did share PRC updates with Elizabeth Carr-Jones.

Public Comment – N/A

Ms. Canniff motioned to adjourn at 9:01pm, seconded by Mr. Lasker. Approved 5-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.